



Veterans Service Office
St. Croix County Services Center
1752 Dorset Lane, New Richmond, WI 54017
Phillip Landgraf, CVSO
Email: phillip.landgraf@co.saint-croix.wi.us
Phone: (715) 386-4759 Fax: (715) 386-4756

To: Veterans who ride to the VA with our drivers

This letter is meant to provide information to all who use the transportation provided by our volunteer drivers. The drivers do all they can to get each of you safely to and from the appointments scheduled at the Veterans Administration Health Care System (VAHCS) at the Minneapolis VAMC only. We are fortunate to have wonderful drivers who use their personal vehicles, their personal time and endless patience. The Veterans who ride with them are usually gracious and appreciative of this service, and we thank you for the respect you give to our drivers.

Background of Transportation:

In 1987 the Veterans Service Committee authorized the Veterans Service Office to provide limited transportation to the VA Health Care System on a selective, case-by-case basis. It continues to be the feeling of the Committee and the Veterans Service Officer that the burden of transportation to medical treatment at the VA rests ultimately with the veteran, a member of his family, or other persons whom the veteran may hire for this purpose.

Requirements:

1. St. Croix County residency.
2. We provide transportation Monday-Friday to the Minneapolis VAMC only.
3. The veteran must be ambulatory, and able to get in and out of the vehicle under his own power. If the veteran needs aid to enter the vehicle, spouses and/or family members may be asked to accompany the veteran to assist him or her. If their assistance is not necessary, spouses can ride only on an available space basis.
4. Call to notify us of appointments as soon as they are scheduled for you, with a minimum of three to four days before (the earlier the better) in order for us to schedule your driver. You will need to call us by 2:00 p.m. the day before your appointment and we will inform you of your pick-up time.
5. Schedule appointments as often as possible in the morning. Although each day has its own schedule, our goal is to make the day as short as

possible for both the patients and the driver. The VAHCS works to coordinate appointments with patients who travel in groups. If you have been given an afternoon appointment, but want to ride with us, please try to re-schedule for a morning one. There is a phone number on the paperwork you are sent and appointments can be changed by the veteran. For example, veterans can usually get in and out quickly from short appointments like blood-draws, x-rays, and podiatry. Needless to say, there will be waiting involved, but by scheduling earlier in the day, some of the unnecessary waiting can be avoided.

6. Please **do not** hassle the driver about waiting. Anyone who displays inappropriate behavior will be asked to make other arrangements for future appointments.
7. Please be on time for the scheduled pick up. The drivers have knowledge of how much time they need to get to the VAHCS. The transportation is for the purpose of appointments. Although meals may be involved, they are not a priority. **Do not** leave the facility to visit or shop. When the driver is ready to leave, everyone must be accounted for. Anyone who displays inappropriate behavior will be asked to make other arrangements for future appointments.
8. We do not charge a fee at this time (as some counties do). This service is provided as an additional benefit to the veterans of St. Croix County. Therefore, if you ride with us, you are not entitled to travel pay from the VAHCS. Anyone abusing this is perpetrating a fraud and will be asked to make other arrangements for future appointments
9. Please consider making a donation of your choosing to the driver to help cover expenses. As gas prices increase, so does the expense borne directly by our volunteer drivers. However, this contribution is strictly voluntary. You will not be refused service if you don't feel that you can make a donation.

These are a few points that each veteran should keep in mind as we try to make the transportation as fair and comfortable as possible. If there are any questions or concerns, please call 715-386-4759.

Thank you for your cooperation,

Phillip Landgraf
St. Croix County Veterans Service Officer